

**PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, JANURARY 8, 2014  
TIME: 7:00 P.M.  
RUSSELL LIBRARY  
HUBBARD ROOM  
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT**

**Members Present:** Chair Carl R. Chisem  
Councilman David Bauer  
Councilman James B. Sreeto

**Staff Present:** William Russo, Public Works Director  
Robert Dobmeier, Deputy Public Works Director

**Others Present:** Peter Casarella  
David Korman  
Brendan Cameron  
Janette Cameron  
William Richards  
Keegan Richey  
Patricia Bandzes  
Tom Archer  
Taylor Warren  
Christopher Vereneau  
Bob Cox  
Joe Bennett  
Melinda Moore

**Absent:** Councilman Thomas Serra  
Councilwoman Sandra Russo-Driska

RECEIVED  
14 MAR 11 PM 2:25  
TOWN CLERK  
MIDDLETOWN, CONN.

Chair Carl Chisem opened the Public Works and Facilities Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m. He requested a motion to approve the minutes dated December 11, 2013. It was brought up amongst the commissioners that an amendment needs be made showing that Councilwoman Sandra Russo-Driska absent for the last meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes with the correction. Motion was seconded and approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT –**

Earl Roberts introduced himself and spoke about his concern regarding Reservoir Road. The issue is concerning the causeway between CVH Reservoirs #3 and #4. According to the city attorney in a provided letter dated November 8, 2013, this is a state matter. Earl Roberts continued the discussion stating that two years ago there were 5 cars that were burned near the reservoir. This raised a concern with contamination to the water. He believes that the answer to the problem would be to have a system with guards and the City of Middletown police department. The state of Connecticut has been given the suggestion of putting guard rails on the causeway. Connecticut Valley Hospital took it upon themselves to put up a heavy duty sliding gate near the reservoir, which is too heavy to move all the time. Earl feels

that residents of Middletown have been restricted their rights to use the public road because the gate is in the way. A private attorney was hired by the state to determine how much of the road belongs to the city. It was stated that roughly 400 feet of a mile and a half stretch of road is owned by the state of Connecticut. Earl would like the commission help protect this road by verifying that it is a public road. It was recommended that the issue be brought to the council. A motion was made to send the information to council with the understanding that Director Russo makes an appropriate inquiry with the office of the General Council and communicate back to the commission the results of it. Director Russo stated that the City Attorney will report back to the commission the results of his decision. It was also requested that this information be stated on the next agenda as old business for further review. Motion was then seconded and approved.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE –**

Director Russo stated that a packet was presented to Mr. MacDonald for an FOI request. The total cost for the packet submitted to him was \$73.00. In the FOI request, Mr. MacDonald wanted to know why sand and salt are used on the streets during storms. It was confirmed that a salt magnesium and water mix will be placed on the streets before a storm occurs so that snow and ice are easier to remove.

#### **NEW BUSINESS –**

5a. Yankee Gas Public Informational Meeting – Keegan Richey of Yankee Gas introduced the members of his team: Peter Cassarella with the sales department, Patricia Bandzes with computer relations and William Richards with contracting and support. Keegan stated that a replacement project consisting of replacing and repairing existing natural gas mains will be taking place. The five following streets will be affected by these repairs: Saybrook Road, Bow Lane, Wall Street, Frisbie Street and Evergreen Circle.

Annually 30 miles of replacement pipe is completed throughout Connecticut, which costs around \$40,000,000.00; so the plan is to start work on Saybrook Road on January 20, 2014. It will take Yankee Gas about 4-5 months to complete the work depending on the weather.

Any damages that may be made to the streets or yards will be repaired to the same, if not better condition at the cost of Yankee Gas. The streets will be excavated to install the new gas mains, which will take around two and a half months. Once this step is completed, the gas services will be replaced to each home and business in the area. There are two methods when installing gas services, direct bury or insert with a tie over. Tie over is the method that was used when the current gas mains were originally installed. The current pipe is in great condition, so it will be tied over to the new gas main that will be installed. A hole will be dug in the street, another will be dug at the curb line, and a third hole will be dug right at the house. A new pipe will be inserted through the old pipe. This technique minimizes the amount of excavation needed to complete the work while saving money.

New temporary permanent asphalt will be filled in the excavated areas of the streets, and new grass seed will be placed in the dug up areas of each yard. The temporary permanent asphalt will match the depth of the street as of its current condition. After letting it sit until the project is completed, it will be left another ninety days for the compaction time frame to be completed. Once the time frame is completed, Yankee Gas will come back to mill and repair a set parameter of the street that is agreed upon with Public Works and Engineering Department.

Director Russo asked Keegan to touch up on the reason for the upgrade and the daytime traffic control technique that will be used. Keegan specified that the Middletown police will be used to maintain the flow of traffic throughout the project duration. The upgrade is taking place because there are a lot of

leaking pipes. The neighborhood was identified as an area that is in one of poorest conditions as far as gas mains.

Keegan stated that they try to coordinate the projects with municipality projects. Saybrook Road needs to be paved in the future, so Yankee Gas wanted to complete their gas project before the City of Middletown decides to pave.

It was asked among the commissioners if the power will be shut off in people's homes during the project duration. Keegan verified that when the service installations are being done, piping will be installed within the homes in order to tie in the gas appliances. Due to this, the power will be shut off for about one to two hours. Yankee Gas will contact each homeowner to ensure that there will be no inconveniences when the power is shut down.

Director Russo asked Keegan if he can inform the residents how far down the roads Yankee Gas will be making the repairs. Keegan informed the residents and the commission that the parameters consist of Saybrook Road, down Bow Lane and up Wall Street. Evergreen Circle and Frisbee Street are in better shape than the others as far as the piping. A different procedure will take place when renovating these areas because the pipes do not need to be replaced. The pipes are currently running on low pressure so they cannot be mixed with the new 60 pound pressure system. Yankee Gas will shut down the main, remove all of the gas and then perform a pressure test. Once the pressure test is complete, it will be tied in to the new gas main on Saybrook Road. There will be no digging in the street on Evergreen Circle or Frisbee Street. Some work may have to be performed on the properties for services. Sometimes the fittings, tees and/or valves on the individual services aren't rated for the 60 pounds of pressure from the new system. A new one will have to be installed before connecting to the new gas main.

It was stated that Bow Lane was just recently resurfaced, which raised the concern of most homeowners in the area. Restoration requirements will be heightened by the city to reconstruct the road close to its original condition after the repairs take place.

**5b. Road Bond Update** – Director Russo stated that there was a meeting with engineering that took place in regards to the upcoming road bonds. Deputy Director Robert Dobmeier stated that Saybrook Road and Wall Street are two of the roads that he prioritizes on the list. There is a 15 year plan on replacing the cast iron steel mains throughout Connecticut. About a year ago there was a public informational meeting regarding the drainage on Hunting Hill Avenue. Roadway work off of Ridge Road and East Ridge Road near Farm Hill School will occur shortly after the public informational meeting which will be held sometime next month. Long Hill Road near the new soccer fields will need to be reconstructed, which will be going out to bid. There are a few other roads that need minimal surface work or some new drainage such as Coe Avenue and Boston Road.

Director Russo stated that from Hunting Hill Avenue to Farm Hill Road the sidewalk needs to be replaced from asphalt to concrete. Monarch and Willow Bee Lane off of Camp Street will be done in-house, Boston Road from George Street to the Middlefield Line need sidewalk repairs. The intersection from Russell Street where the bridge is, to East Main Street where the light is, needs a sidewalk installation especially for pedestrians going to Stop and Shop. Director Russo stated that this area may be teed off into a dead end, with input from the nearby residents. This will allow cars to see better when pulling out. ADA compliant ramps with sidewalks will be installed considering this area is walking distance to Farm Hill School.

One of the commissioners asked if the sidewalk construction will be tied into the tennis court reconstruction which was spoken about in the last meeting. Director Russo informed him that engineering department is aware and will be added to the table considering that this area is a heavy summer walking district and a highly populated school area.

It was asked if the sidewalk repairs will go out to bid. Deputy Director Dobmeier informed the commission that in a couple weeks, it will go out to bid.

#### **OLD BUSINESS --**

- a. December 2013 Overtime Report – Director Russo stated that the majority of Parks and Public Works overtime is due to snow storms.

One of the commissioners asked if the overtime reports include all of the personnel. Director Russo stated that it does not include the last January 2013 storm but Parks, Public Works and Sanitation Departments are all included.

- b. December 2013 Building Permits – Director Russo stated that if the commission would like copies of the building permits monthly, he will keep on providing them. One of the commissioners stated that they would like to continue looking at the monthly permits, even if it is just electronically.

#### **NEW BUSINESS --**

- a. December 2013 Monthly Report – Highway Division – There was no discussion regarding Highway Division's monthly report, although it was included in the packet for review.
- b. December 2013 Weekly Reports – Parks Division – There was no discussion regarding Parks Division weekly reports, although they were included in the packet for review.

Director Russo stated that more open space areas are occurring and the department is not getting any money to maintain them. Extra open space sidewalks need to be shoveled and more phone calls for trees that border properties are being received; Public Works is primarily in charge of street trees. Director Russo will work with Tina Gomes to see how this situation can be handled.

Director Russo stated that most development spaces are woods. If a property that is used for hiking consists of dead trees, funding will be needed to remove them. One of the commissioners suggested that Director Russo should put an overture out to other commissions that have interests in open spaces. Another suggestion was to establish an association of volunteers similar to that of the state forest, whom can help maintain trails. This will keep the open space available, and hopefully improve the value.

Director Russo stated that the council approved the Resolution for Frank Marchese and Steve Crouch at the last meeting. This resolution was for the naming of two soccer fields, one at Long Hill Road and one at Country Club Road in honor of the two of the two foremost forces to develop and grow soccer in Middletown. He wanted the commission to have the resolution copy since it will be a topic of discussion at the February Council meeting.

One of the commissioners asked who was responsible for the clearing of the sidewalks in front of their properties within 24 hours. Director Russo stated that he met up with the Office of the General Council in regards to this issue and bringing the ordinance back for review. A lot of homeowners, businesses and landlords do not shovel their sidewalks. Letters are sent out to help prevent the ongoing issue, but the

Homeowner of 323 Old Mill Road stated that the property on Reservoir Road was brought to his attention because when he looked at his re-evaluation it went up 400% in taxes. He believes the city shouldn't own the property and that we shouldn't have access to it because it's surrounded by state property.

Ray Roberts wanted to add to Earl's comments. He stated that he is not going to move the gate by hand due to health conditions. It is the only heavily treed area that hikers, bicyclists and people that walk their dogs or ride their horses enjoy using. He too believes that keys should be given out to residents that wish to have them.

Director Russo stated that he has been advised by the General Council that the property doesn't belong here based on what the state of Connecticut them. He was told not to entertain anything with the state because it is all legal issues. He stated that if Mr. Roberts feels the state is wrong, an attorney will need to be hired and go after the state of Connecticut because the property does not belong to the city.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

- a. Coleman's Carnival Approved Contract 2014 - The contract was already approved by the Public Works & Facilities Commission; Director Russo just wanted to show that it has been signed.

Chair Chisem made a motion to forward the 2014 Coleman Carnival Contract to the council. A few other topics from the agenda will be moved to the next meeting. Motion was seconded and approved.

- b. Proposed Roadway Reconstruction - Director Russo stated that this is just an informational thesis for the commission to review.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Director Russo introduced himself to the public in regards to the Public Informational Meeting for the Ridge Road project. He also introduced the Public Works & Facilities Commission along with Alan Nafis, the design engineer with the Weston & Sampson firm, and Tom Nigosanti, the City of Middletown's Chief Engineer.

Tom Nigosanti began briefly explaining the introduction of the proposed roadwork to all of the Commissioners and the present members of the public. He stated that the project consists on a couple of different road bonds combined. It covers the Ridge Road stretch from Randolph Road all the way up to East Ridge Road and back down to Randolph Road along with some of the side streets off of East Ridge Road. As part of the rehabilitation, the pavement will have to be removed and re-paved. New curbing and driveways in need of repair will be re-constructed as well. The intersection of East Ridge Road and Ridge Road will be redesigned to make it safer. It will consist of new sidewalks and cross walks and a more standardized 4 way stop. The bidding will begin in the late winter or early spring.

Alan Nafis began stating how Ridge Road and East Ridge Road will be undergoing full reconstruction. It will begin with a new base material so that the whole road including the curbing will be rebuilt. The roads elevation will remain the same, but the width may undergo some variations to ensure the road is an even 24 feet wide. The intent of the project is to limit the amount of work that was going

\$50.00 fine needs to be strictly enforced to prevent further issues. The language in the ordinance will be changed and brought to the commission for review. From there, it will be forwarded on to the council for completion.

The issues with parking bans and people not moving their cars was brought up. Director Russo stated that he generally has the conformance inspector, Rick Romano, knock on doors to inform people of the parking ban so that they can move their cars. If the cars are not moved a \$35.00 charge will be conducted. If there is a second time where the same car is still in the road during the time of a parking ban, the car will then be towed at a higher expense.

The resident of 29 Wall Street stated that alongside the whole street, there is a lot of dead wood from trees that needs to be removed. He wanted to know if the city hires contractors to remove any of the dead trees in the area. Director Russo stated that the city does contract it out, but he will have it looked at in the morning to see what kind of hazards there are in the area.

As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 P.M.